c.1.
Inside

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
Research and Analysis Branch

R & A 1159

097.3
Z1092
No. 1159

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REFERENCE DIVISION
FILE COPY
PLEASE RETURN
REF

CHANGES IN THE GERMAN PLAN FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF AIR-RAID EVACUEES OVER GREATER GERMANY AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

The extent and intensity of Allied bombings led to an increasing overcrowding of available reception facilities in regions of recertion remote from the bombing; at the present time, evacuees are directed in large numbers to the countryside adjacent to the bombed cities. The abandonment of the earlier scheme is indicative of an increasingly critical domestic situation.

This document contains information affection the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, 50 U.S.C. 31 and 32, as amended. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

30

27 November 1943

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, 50 U.S.C., 31 and 32 as amended. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Summary.		i
I.	Introduction	1
II.	The First Phase: Evacuation to a Single Distant Region of Reception.	1
III.	The Second Phase: Improvisation	3
IV.	The Present Phase: Evacuation within the Bombed Gau or to Distant Regions of Reception.	6
V.	Implications of the Changes in the Plan. . . .	8

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. The original plan for the evacuation of civilians as a result of Allied air raids concerned only those who had actually been bombed out. The basis of this plan was the territorial divisions (Gaue) of the Nazi Party, all evacuees from a Gau in which a bombing had occurred being assigned to a specific Gau elsewhere in Germany, which was reserved for the reception of evacuees from the area attacked.

2. The problem of evacuation grew more complex as it was extended to cover precautionary evacuation of non-workers, as immediate post-raid panic disrupted the orderly plan, as numerous family factors came into conflict with the preconceived plan, and as some of the Gaue designated as reception areas were themselves bombed.

3. During an intermediate period, Gaue in addition to the original reception area were assigned, and resort was had to improvisation to meet the many personal problems which arose with the spread of the evacuation to a larger part of the population.

4. Eventually, however, an amended plan has grown out of the experience gained from the difficulties encountered. The present plan provides for evacuation of two sorts, which are used indiscriminately as circumstances warrant: either evacuation to one of several assigned regions of reception in other parts of the Reich, or evacuation

to unbombed parts of the Gau in which the bombing occurred.

5. It is concluded that the changes in the plan indicate an increasingly critical domestic situation which has forced the authorities to abandon a preconceived plan and to resort to compromises in order to meet the evacuation problem. It is felt that increased Allied air attack may require still further changes in the present plan.

CHANGES IN THE GERMAN PLAN FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF AIR-RAID EVACUEES OVER GREATER GERMANY AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

I. INTRODUCTION

The mounting scale of Allied air attack has forced Germany to pay increasing attention to the problems of evacuating the population from bombed-out areas and of the precautionary evacuation of children and other non-workers from threatened regions.

Concerted efforts have been made to achieve order and efficiency in such evacuations, and to hold them to a preconceived administrative scheme. It is still possible for individuals to make their own arrangements; migration to places outside Greater Germany also lies beyond the central control. But group evacuation inside Greater Germany functions in accordance with a definite plan for the distribution of the evacuees. A description of this plan and the changes in it which have been forced by circumstances, as well as an assessment of the meaning of these changes, are the purposes of this paper.[1]

II. THE FIRST PHASE: EVACUATION TO A SINGLE DISTANT REGION OF RECEPTION

The original scheme contemplated the evacuation of

---

1. Much of the information presented has been drawn from two instructive and authoritative articles by Herbert Mahn, "Precautionary Evacuation: the Voice of Common Sense in the Areas Exposed to Aerial Warfare" (Das Reich, 30 May 1943), and "Lessons of Evacuation: Planned Direction and Improvisation" (Das Reich, 29 August 1943).

bombed-out persons only. The basis of the plan was the assignment of a single region of reception in a distant part of Germany for each region from which evacuation was planned. The territorial unit selected was the Gau, which is the division used by the Nazi Party; this was doubtless used because the Party is the agency on which official responsibility for all evacuation rests.

In this plan, each Gau exposed to bombing was assigned a corresponding Gau elsewhere in Germany; only evacuees from the former were received in the latter, and they were evacuated only to this region.

There is not sufficient evidence available to reconstruct this plan in all its details. In any event, the number of persons evacuated under it was small, since more extensive bombing soon forced alterations in the scheme.

It is known, however, that, in 1942, persons from Wilhelmshaven (Gau Weser-Ems) were evacuated to Gau Salzburg, persons from Cuxhaven (Gau Ost-Hannover) were evacuated to Muenchen-Oberbayern, and persons from Hamburg to Gau Bayreuth.

This general scheme of predetermined regions of reception had the advantage of being simple and orderly. It permitted a central control over the whereabouts and the number of bombed-out persons relocated in each region of reception. At the same time, relocation in distant regions of reception prevented overcrowding in areas exposed to

aerial warfare, while it opened up for evacuees parts of the Reich that had not felt the impact of war to the same extent as the bombed regions.

III. THE SECOND PHASE: IMPROVISATION

This phase is characterized by an application of the simple scheme to an ever-widening circle of evacuees. More and more people were bombed out. Furthermore, what had been a relief measure reserved for the relatively small number of those bombed-out was now extended to include precautionary evacuees, i.e., expectant mothers, small children with their mothers, school children up to fourteen years of age, old people, and invalids. Consequently, one region of reception was no longer considered adequate for a bombed region and, beginning perhaps in early 1943, additional regions of reception were designated.

From scattered newspaper reports and intercepted letters it is possible to draw up a list of bombed regions and of corresponding regions of reception as of the beginning of October 1943. The relatively complicated pattern is indicated in Table 1 on the following page.

Further complications, however, arose which made it difficult to hold the amended plan of several areas of reception for each bombed region to the preconceived scheme. All individuals who were not working and not subject to the labor draft were entitled and even encouraged to make their own arrangements with relatives and acquaintances anywhere

Table 1. REGIONS OF RECEPTION, 1 OCTOBER 1943

Bombed region	Region of reception	Date of earliest evidence[1]
Weser-Ems.....	Salzburg	8 October 1942
	Kurhessen	22 March 1943
	Sachsen	5 August 1943
Essen.....	Niederdonau	21 March 1943
	Baden	17 May 1943
	Schwaben, Wuerttenberg-Hohenzollern, Kaernten, Steiermark, Tirol-Vorarlberg	18 July 1943
Duesseldorf.....	Mainfranken	4 June 1943
	Thueringen	4 July 1943
	Schwaben	1 May 1943
Koeln-Aachen.....	Niederschlesien	8 June 1943
	Sachsen	8 June 1943
Westfalen-Nord....	Mainfranken, Franken, Schwaben, Muenchen-Oberbayern, Bayreuth	30 May 1943
Westfalen-Sued....	Baden	26 July 1943
	Pommern	27 July 1943
	Sudetenland	16 August 1943
Ost-Hannover.....	Muenchen-Oberbayern	15 November 1942
Hamburg.....	Bayreuth	20 May 1942
	Schleswig-Holstein	Before 24 Sept.43
	Mark Brandenburg	24 September 1943
Schleswig-Holstein.....	Pommern	25 June 1943
	Franken	24 July 1943
Berlin.....	Mark Brandenburg, Ostpreussen, Pommern	30 May 1943
	Wartheland	29 August 1943

1. The date of the earliest evidence is given in order to give some idea of the constant additions of new regions of reception.

in the Reich, provided that their new quarters were not needed by the authorities. Since proof of acquaintanceship cannot possibly be demanded, wealthy persons were actually free to move wherever there was a vacancy. Furthermore, there were instances, in cases of panic immediately after a raid, in which the scheme broke down. Thus the Party organizations themselves, especially the National Socialist People's Welfare Association, have evacuated whole trainloads of people to regions other than the proper regions of reception. Finally, though there were instances of evacuees being threatened with forced transfer from an unauthorized place of refuge to their proper region of reception, such a transfer was sometimes declared inadvisable: this happened in cases such as those of families with many children, evacuees housed on their own farms, families in which the father worked in a region different from the appropriate region of reception, and evacuees housed in rooms which were not subject to seizure for the benefit of air-raid victims from a corresponding bombed region.

During this period of makeshift adjustments, the advantages of the early system began to disappear and its disadvantages became accentuated. Central control over the movement of evacuees was breaking down. As additional regions of reception had continually to be improvised under intensive bombing, more and more exceptions from the scheme accumulated. Furthermore, as aerial warfare extended over

larger and larger parts of the Reich, the rural areas of distant regions of reception were increasingly needed for evacuees from the bombed cities within those regions themselves. The application of the scheme to precautionary evacuees began to jeopardize the relocation of the bombed-out, which was considered more urgent. Chiefly for this last reason, precautionary evacuation from western and northwestern Germany to distant regions was reduced. Moreover, travel between distant regions of reception and home towns for mere visits and the unauthorized return of evacuees to bombed cities had assumed threatening proportions. Because of this reversal of movement, controls of evacuation, transportation, food supplies, and allocation of labor were rendered difficult. It finally became clear that the population of the raided areas was more willing to undergo the privations and hardships of precautionary evacuation to nearby regions than to be moved far away from their own home towns, and an amendment of the plan was consequently necessary.

IV. THE PRESENT PHASE: EVACUATION WITHIN THE BOMBED GAU OR TO DISTANT REGIONS OF RECEPTION

It has now become necessary for the German Government to authorize evacuations both to distant regions of reception and to areas within the bombed Gau itself. This new p licy apparently does not contemplate moving back from distant regions of reception persons already evacuated. Bombed-out people will also continue to go to these distant

regions; as stated above, provision for the bombed-out was the most important cause of the change in plan. Even in the future, certain categories of precautionary evacuees not yet clearly defined will continue to be taken to those distant regions. Furthermore, the Gau of Berlin presents exceptional difficulties: the number of prospective evacuees is so great and facilities in Mark Brandenburg so limited that precautionary evacuees from Berlin will continue to go to eastern Prussia and Wartheland.

On the other hand, evacuation within the bombed Gau, i.e., to temporary shelters on the outskirts of the city or to adjacent rural areas, will increase in importance. In the future, schools will be evacuated within the Gau. In addition there is some evidence that even working people will be allowed to participate in precautionary evacuation within the Gau: they would sleep in relative safety and in the morning commute to the city for work. As a matter of fact, there are already evidences of relocation within the Gau all later than 1 June 1943; these are given in Table 2:

Region of internal evacuation	Bombed city	Date of earliest evidence
Westmark.....	Ludwigshafen	14 September 1943
Hessen-Nassau.	Frankfurt a. M.	14 August 1943
Sued-Hannover-Braunschweig	?	16 August 1943
Mecklenburg...	Rostock	6 June 1943
Pommern.....	Stettin	2 August 1943
Muenchen-Oberbayern..	Muenchen	20 August 1943

V. IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGES IN PLAN

The original plan for the evacuation of bombed-out people was orderly and adequate. The critical stage was reached when the problem of precautionary evacuees arose, and it was decided to use the machinery existing for the evacuation of the bombed-out. In the course of time this led to a number of improvisations which all but cancelled the advantages of the original scheme, and also raised the additional difficulties described. If precautionary evacuation had remained small, the scheme might have worked indefinitely. In fact, evacuation to distant parts threatened to impinge heavily upon the German economy and to effect home morale. The Government was faced with unwelcome competition among various groups of the population for the same limited accommodations in the regions of reception. Bombed-out and precautionary evacuees from a bombed region depended upon the same regions of reception; bombed regions were often forced by circumstances to send evacuees to a region of reception which was already serving another bombed region; and more and more frequently a city in one of the regions of reception was itself attacked or threatened by attack, making it impossible to accommodate all the evacuees from other parts of the country and from the bombed city itself within the same region. Additional complications were considerable: two-way-traffic between bombed regions and regions of reception, and reluctance on

the part of evacuees to be moved far from home. After a short period of improvisation, Germany therefore returned to a settled but amended plan based on the earlier system.

The new combined scheme does not remove grievances already encountered. On the contrary, some will be aggravated to the extent to which removal to distant areas is part of the present scheme. It may however reduce the speed with which new grievances will accumulate.

In all probability the overcrowding both of distant and of nearby regions of refuge was unavoidable under any scheme. If the first precautionary evacuees had been moved to nearby regions and only later evacuees had been taken to distant regions after all nearby facilities had been exhausted, a greater number of persons might have been evacuated at an earlier period. People would have been less reluctant to move to the vicinity of their home towns and even workers might have participated in the movement. Such a scheme, however, might have led to difficulties of another kind: the bombed regions would have been filled earlier, and the more complicated, long-distance evacuations postponed until the country and its economy were laboring under a heavier strain.

It is true, therefore, that, with the spread and intensification of aerial warfare, difficulties of one type or another are bound to arise, but it is equally true that the successive measures adopted by the German authorities reveal the strain which aerial warfare has imposed upon the

home front. The Government was forced to abandon, at least for a time, its system of evacuation and to resort to makeshift adjustments. It had to condone all sorts of individual irregularities the adjustment of which would have been too difficult. It was obliged to cater to certain natural preferences of the evacuees although, from the strictly objective point of view, such desires as visits of evacuees to their home towns and of workers to their evacuated families were detrimental to the war effort. The Government has also had to provide for workers a moderate amount of safety in the vicinity of the heavily bombed cities. It has had to yield to pressure from inhabitants of distant regions of reception and from bombed-out persons in heavily bombed regions and to grant them certain priorities with regard to evacuation.

In conclusion it may be said that the development of evacuation measures reveals an increasingly critical domestic situation which has repeatedly forced the authorities to adopt the policy of accepting a lesser evil. It is not impossible that the mounting scale of the Allied air offensive may impose the necessity for still further changes in plans for evacuation.